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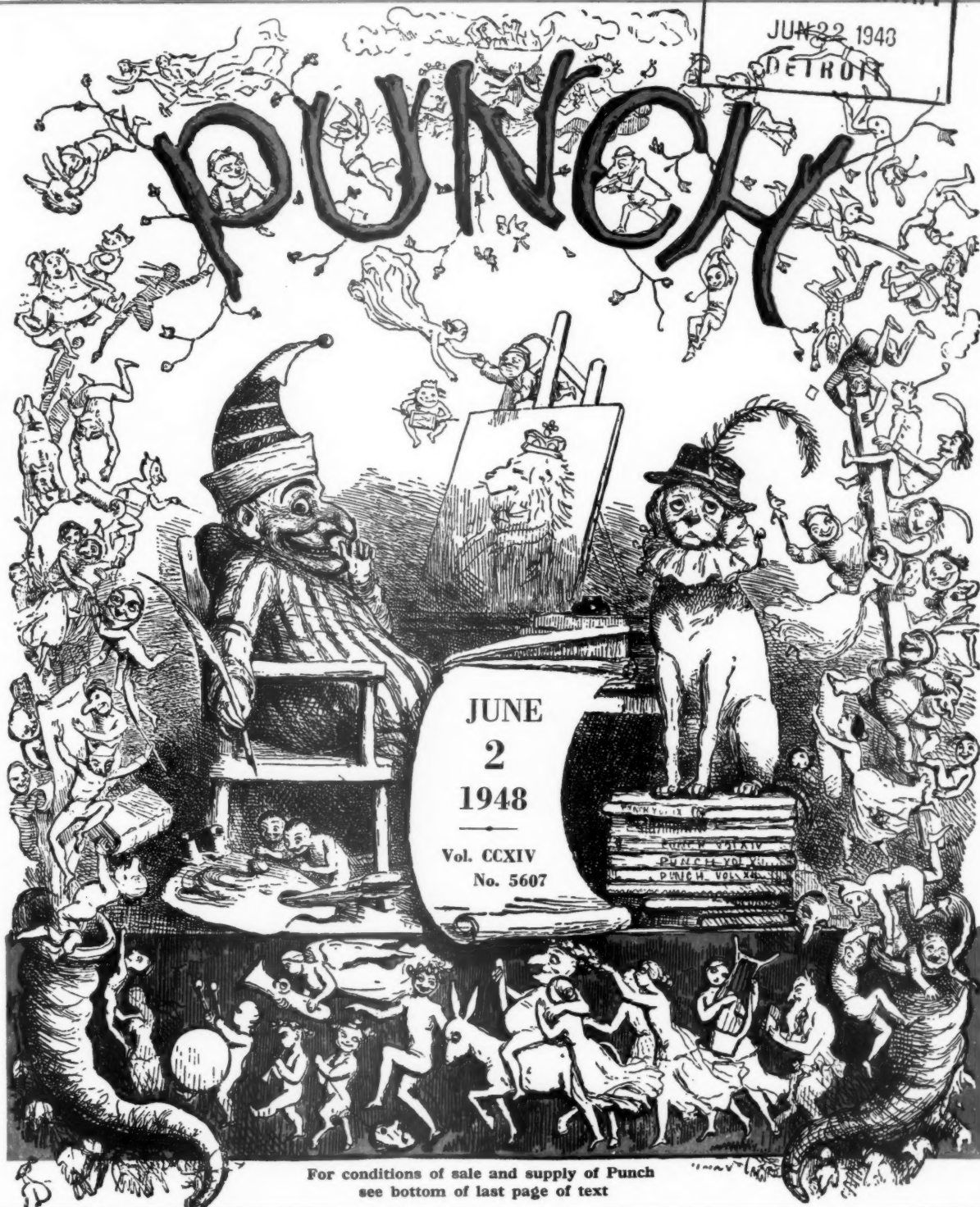
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DETROIT

PUNCH



JUNE
2
1948

Vol. CCXIV
No. 5607

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**K shoe
for a man**



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KIA-ORA MEANS GOOD HEALTH!





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SPR



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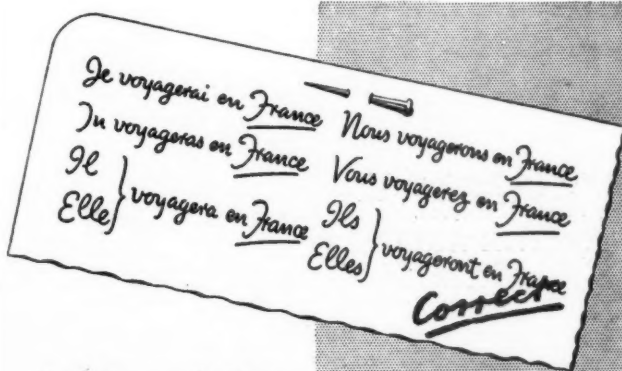
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the kindest powder in the world

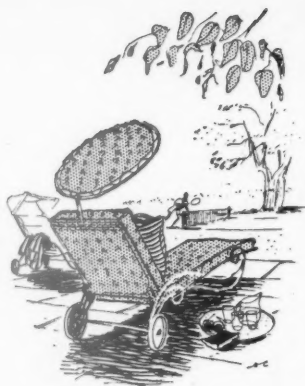
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For further information apply to any Travel Agent or to the French National Tourist Office, 179 Piccadilly, London, W.1.

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rubber tyred wheels. £28.2.3
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Made from formulae which have
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for over a hundred years.

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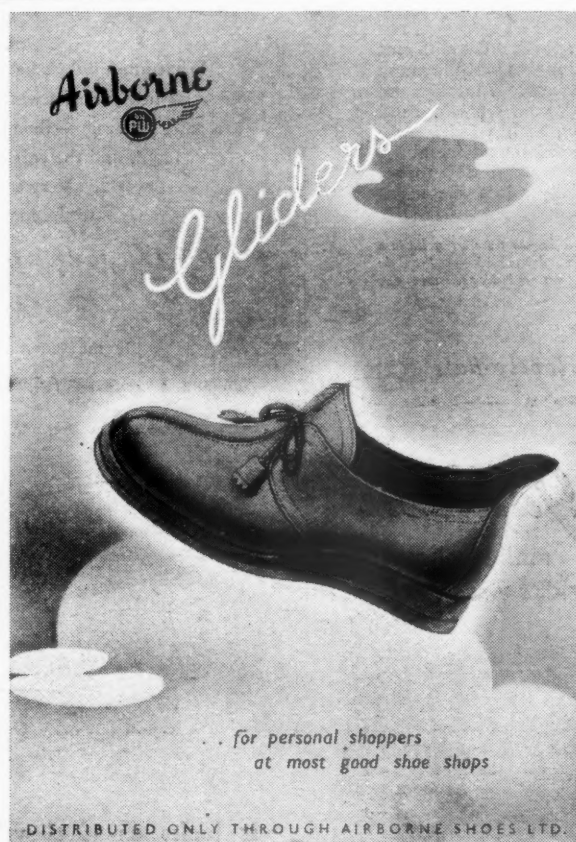
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notably that of the famous pimento
berry of Jamaica.

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notably that of the famous Blue
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(IN)



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can
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with
you!

Slip this truly lightweight radio
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*makes all the
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Teething is easy—for Terry

Yes . . . at just nine months this young man is already the proud possessor of four strong teeth. "Terry thrives on Trufood, and has no trouble teething" says Terry's mother—who has kept him healthy and happy on famous Humanised Trufood ever since he was 3 weeks old. How is your baby getting on?

*Details of Terry's progress appear in a letter from Terry's mother, who lives in Blackpool.

Trufood

Nearest to Mother's Milk

HOW IS YOUR BABY GETTING ON?
To: Trufood Ltd. (Dept. P. 4), Wrenbury, Cheshire.
Please send me a copy of "Cradle Days." My baby is aged months.

Name

Address

TF 251/1050

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On the CONTINENT
they're saying . . .



* Exports have first call on Morris Cars and a home quote is especially advantageous for delivery to such essential users as Government Departments, the Police, etc.

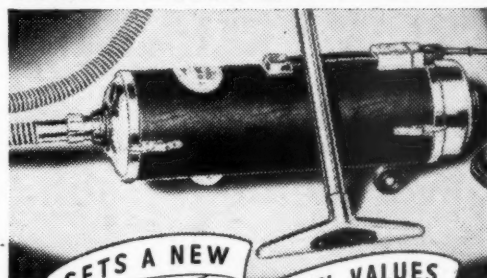
"I'm going to have a
MORRIS*"*



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THE BRITISH VACUUM CLEANER & ENGINEERING CO. LTD.
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To those who
appreciate



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BOLSKUMMEL

— the original Dutch Kummel has at last returned. Double distilled from pure grain spirit and genuine Dutch caraway seed, BOLSKUMMEL owes its supremacy to the secret formula of Lucas Bols, who founded the firm in 1575. Its heritage helps to make it the healthiest of all liqueurs. Don't say Kummel — say BOLSKUMMEL.

BOLSKUMMEL

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Think in Ink...



- The ink that's good to the last drop — no dilution; no harmful solvents.
- The ink to match your personality—in nine beautiful colours.
- The ink in the world-famous 'tip-fill' bottle.
- The ink that *banishes* 'Ink-Clog'.

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Made by the Waterman Pen Co. Ltd., Manufacturers of the world-famous Waterman's Fountain Pens and Pencils.

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**Ever-Ready
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INCLUDING PURCHASE TAX
IN A NEAT
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OBTAINABLE
EVERYWHERE



IT'S THE WEIGHT BEHIND THE EDGE THAT
GIVES SMOOTHER, EASIER SHAVES

*The First
Cigar
for the
best
days*

EST. 1863



Don Garcia

MADE IN FIVE SIZES

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"One-man band!"

In the performance of complicated feats of co-ordination, Brookhirst electrical control beats even a one-man band. Frequent starting, stopping, reversing, inching, speed control, braking, remote operation, sequence operation of interdependent machinery—all these in the most intricate combinations are provided by Brookhirst systems of control.

The most involved set-up of linked operations has no terrors to daunt the Brookhirst organization, with its vast store of experience of different industries and its zest for tackling the unknown.

Our etchings of Old Chester are again available for responsible executives who care to write for them.



BROOKHIRST SWITCHGEAR LTD.
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Appointment with Success

This young man knows that his first appearance will create a good impression. His hair is perfectly groomed—Nutriline keeps hair neat and tidy, without plastering it down. But Nutriline is more than a hair dressing; it is a scientific hair tonic embodying a new bi-active organic principle. Massage—with Nutriline—tones up the scalp, stimulates the hair roots, overcomes dandruff and improves the quality and glossiness of your hair. With every bottle you are given a booklet full of interesting facts about Nutriline and hair health.



Pears

NUTRILINE

The NEW Scientific Tonic Hair Dressing

WUE 18/100

LETTERS THAT LIVE



Sir
J.M. Barrie
writes about
the Australians

"The things we can talk about if you will only come to dinner! The Australians, for instance. I must admit that I have a leaning to them, being such a young side and having, all the time they are batting or holding out their hands for a catch, to remember the 67 rules..."

Letter-writing is an unrationed pleasure that brings richer pleasure still in the letters we receive.

Basildon Bond—unquestioned first choice of discriminating letter-writers—is, alas, not always to be had for the asking, but is always worth asking for. It adds to the joy both of writing and receiving a letter.

Salvaged notepaper, when repulped is used for the packaging of export goods. So old and unwanted letters, too, can play their part. Please give all you can to salvage.

Basildon Bond

BRITAIN'S MOST
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NOTEPAPER



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the
Marshall & Snelgrove
COUNTRY SHOPS

BIRMINGHAM · HARROGATE · SOUTHPORT
LEEDS · SCARBOROUGH · LEICESTER



The fable of the man-at-arms

There was once a Soldier home from the wars, with more fame than fortune. 'Fine words butter no parsnips,' observed his allies, 'but virtue brings its own reward . . . moreover, every flow must have an ebb, and charity begins at home. How will you live on your island, now all the fighting's done?' 'By force of arms,' answered the Soldier, as he unbuckled his sword.

Britain's outlook cannot be less adventurous or determined than it was four years ago . . . we are still under arms. TI is helping to forge the weapons for our prosperity — precision tubes, light-alloy extrusions, bicycles and parts by the million, electrical equipment, pressure chambers and traffic signs for the world's markets.



TUBE INVESTMENTS LTD • THE ADELPHI • LONDON • W.C.2

Relief for hard-worked eyes

The eyes are probably the most overworked organs of the body—day and night they are on the job—often in poor light and under other difficult conditions. Optrex Eye Lotion will bring quick relief to tired eyes—soothing and revitalising them at the same time.

For Optrex is at once astringent, tonic and sedative. It has been produced as a result of modern medical research under conditions of clinical asepsis, and is fully approved by doctors and opticians.



Optrex is particularly valuable in cases of:—

1. Inflamed eyes.
2. Encrusted eyelids.
3. Styes and other eye troubles.
4. Eye strain, due to glaring or insufficient light.
5. Eye strain due to overwork.
6. Eye irritation by dust, fog or smoke.

All these eye ailments are particularly prevalent today—and every home should try to keep Optrex on hand to administer first aid. But remember—at the first sign of serious eye trouble, a Qualified Practitioner should be consulted.

OPTREX

the

EYE LOTION

The famous Optrex 'exclusive design' eye baths are on sale once more. Price 10d. including purchase tax. Optrex eye compresses are also available.



Even the new poor can afford to buy the very best toothbrush, thereby practising one form of economy on which even economists agree. Ask for **Wisdom Extra**, the extra-value model of the correct-shape toothbrush



NOW
1/11 including tax

FORD ENTERPRISE FOR BRITISH PROSPERITY

From Coal to Crops

The miner draws the coal from the earth. At Dagenham, the coal is separated by the most up-to-date plant—the only plant of its kind in the British Motor Industry—into coke and by-products. The coke serves to smelt the iron ore and this makes Tractors (there are over 200,000 Fordson Tractors on British Farms to-day). The by-products yield tar and fertilisers. Nothing is wasted at Dagenham. The whole cycle of Ford production is helping to restore Britain's prosperity.



Ford
OF DAGENHAM

CARS • VANS • TRUCKS
TRACTORS



PUNCH

Or

The London Charivari



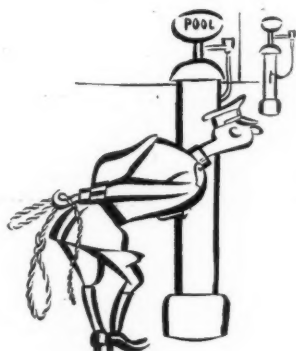
Vol. CCXIV No. 5607

June 2 1948

Charivaria

DR. SUMMERSKILL says the Government are trying to perfect the rationing system. This will ensure that all the things that cannot be got are fairly prohibited.

Many tourists who cross the Atlantic by air to visit this country are thoughtful enough not to patronize British lines, thus ensuring that British taxpayers don't lose anything.



Stalin is studying the text of his refusal of Mr. Truman's next offer to go halfway to repudiate Mr. Wallace's disapproval of the Marshall Plan.

There is a rumour that the Government may compromise on two issues by retaining the death penalty only for the more serious petrol offences.

"WARNING TO CONSUMERS OF WATER SHORTAGE."

Heading—Water Company's leaflet.

They'll just have to consume their whisky shortage neat.

A Leeds housewife has solved the problem of the laundry that returns the linen half-washed. She half-washes it herself before sending it.

"I never know what to write about to friends who expect to hear from me when I am on holiday," says a woman correspondent. Write about half a page, dear.

An evening paper writer asks which is the world's most rare stamp. A correspondent thinks it must be the one some letter writers say they are enclosing.

An American naturalist has discovered a parasite which can eat its way through the hardest metals. The Russians are said to be frantically spraying their curtain three times a day.

"Samples of milk taken direct from the cows were found to be genuine."—"Liverpool Echo."
No red dye or anything?

It is expected that doctors' waiting-rooms will not be able to accommodate the influx of new patients under the National Health scheme in July. Medical men will have to acquire a soothing kerbside manner.

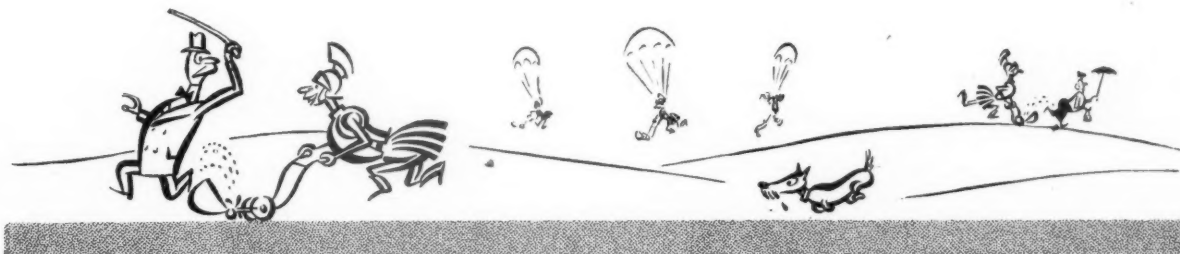


At a recent film *première* only a sparse attendance of the public waited to greet the stars on their arrival at the cinema. But the police good-naturedly formed a cordon to keep what crowd there was.

P.B.I.

"A corpuscle is a soldier with two stripes on his sleeve."
Schoolgirl's answer.

Soviet astronomers declare that grass has begun to grow on Mars. This raises the faint hope that the warlike inhabitants may beat their swords into lawn-mowers.



We May Have Trousers.

(With thanks for a few tokens from the President of the Board of Trade)

IN the land of the wool men's rally
In the home of tweeds and twills
In the isle of the Golden Valley,
In the isle of the Northern mills,

A long farewell to our riches—
They are ended and past and done
And, oh, how our ancient breeches
Shine in the morning sun!

In a dear, dear land seraphic
In a land made beautiful
By many an ancient traffic
And most of all by wool,

In a land of down and dew-pond
In a land where the roses blow
In a land that was quite uncouped
In the days of long ago,

Oh, fleeces as lovely as roses
Carded and combed and spun
By an interesting process
Familiar to everyone!

In the world's supreme asylum
In the great Olympic year
When those who can fling the pilum
Are gathered from far and near,

Though most of our hopes be brittle
And small is our chance of games
It is good to hide for a little
The worst of our people's shames.

By the soul of the simple weaver
Who was wooed by the Fairy Queen
This was a gracious favour
The poet had not foreseen,

That though we are lorn and hapless
Not utterly unbespoke
Should be found—nor utterly napless
The seats of the English Folk.

EVOR.

Freshly Ground Primaries

THE British are the fairest, kindest, most long-suffering people in the world. They have also the best constitution, the most gifted poets and the least corrupt officials. In Matthews, Mortensen, Lawton, Mannion and Finney they have a forward line without equal from China to Peru. Their judicial system is regarded as a model by civilized nations, and their cheeses, when they are at liberty to make them without restraint, are superb. But they do not understand how to make coffee, nor are they capable of grasping the method of election of the President of the United States.

These are curious weaknesses for a nation that has given Yorkshire pudding and Shakespeare to the world. It is a great deal more difficult to make good Yorkshire pudding than to make good coffee. I cannot, for instance, make good Yorkshire pudding myself. And the same thing applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to Shakespeare and the Presidential elections. We ought to conquer these weaknesses. If we are to strengthen our friendship with the U.S.A. we ought to be in a position to offer her citizens a palatable cup when they visit us this summer and to discuss intelligently with them the results of the Republican and Democratic primaries.

This word "primary" causes a lot of trouble to the British people. To clear it up I want you to imagine that this country has decided to elect a President and that Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Aneurin Bevan have offered themselves as candidates in the Democratic interest. A nationwide poll conducted by the Electoral Research Institute at the University of Oakham, Rut., shows that Mr. Bevan is slightly in the lead, but the subsequent distribution in the Midlands of a million metal buttons inscribed "Put Cripps in the Crypt" is believed to have swung industrial opinion over to the camp of Counsellor Earl Winterton, regarded as the dark horse of the election. Meanwhile Field-Marshal Montgomery has announced for the eleventh time his refusal to accept nomination, and the situation in the north-west is complicated by the emergence of a white-bearded old Evangelist styling himself Uncle Pedro and pledged to distribute butter from coast to coast irrespective of creed or colour.

On the Republican side the Lord Mayor of London has angered East Anglian poultry-farmers by an ill-considered telegram of good wishes to the Mayor of Copenhagen on his eightieth birthday, and thus, by practically making a present of the egg-vote to Judge Birkett, has raised the hopes of the Boost for Brendan Bracken party, whose only

chance lies in a split vote and a compromise choice of their own runner. Mr. Attlee has retired to his houseboat, maintaining the unbroken silence of the past six weeks, but is widely believed to be planning a last-minute whirlwind tour of the Ouse Basin.

At this stage the sweeping victory of Mr. Deakin in the Democratic primary in Lincolnshire, which is generally regarded as a pointer for the whole of the northern agricultural block, acts like a douche of cold water on all those who had no idea he was up for election. We need not, however, concern ourselves with the consequences of this. What we have to grasp is that as a result of the Lincolnshire primary six delegates go to Weston-super-Mare pledged to support Mr. Deakin at the Democratic Convention. Thus when all the County primaries are over it is a simple matter to count up the numbers of delegates pledged to support each candidate and to deduce by this means which candidate will come out top at the Convention.

Let us say that Mr. Bevan has one hundred and fifty delegates behind him, Sir Stafford Cripps one hundred and twenty, Earl Winterton forty, Mr. Deakin six and Uncle Pedro none. This is all perfectly straightforward. What muddles the British people is that at the end of the Convention Field-Marshal Montgomery is announced as the Democratic candidate for the 1948 Presidential Election. The explanation is of course quite simple once you understand how these primaries are run. I am explaining that now.

When the Republican candidate has been chosen on the same lines the issue is clear-cut. All the counties have another lot of primaries to elect the delegates to elect the President. It will be simpler if we call these the tertiary primaries, because each county has already had two primaries, one to elect the delegates to elect the Democratic candidate and one to elect the delegates to elect the Republican candidate. At these tertiary primaries votes are also cast for vice-presidential candidates, or rather for delegates to cast votes for them. But I have no time to go into that now. If the principles on which the President of the U.S.A. is elected are not clear by this time, it will be better for you to concentrate on giving your American visitors a good cup of coffee.

Good coffee is made by throwing away every piece of special coffee-making apparatus you have in the house. It is made in a saucepan, and the details of its manufacture are so simple that I could describe them with ease in four lines of print—if I had that much left.

H. F. E.



THE ROBING OF JOHN BULL



"Which country needs my thirty-five pounds most?"

Sprats at Whale Island

or Not-to Reason Why

IT was always the same somehow in the Navy. When you had been doing a job for about a year and things like Practical Training were receding in the mists of time, a new authority would step in and say "Wouldn't it be an awfully good thing if the Wrens learnt *why* they were doing do-and-so—what about a course?"

So a small band of us were sent to the Gunnery School to learn how we got results when we worked our infernal machines on the dummy training sights up at an aircraft range. We did not want to know and we still did not know when we had finished; but there you were, somebody, somewhere, was presumably satisfied.

Our lecture-room was in a brand-new centrally-heated room with a large notice on the door saying WIPE YOUR BOOTS. It was very clean, very refreshing and quite unlike anything we had ever encountered before. Even more startling was our instructor, who was young and good-looking and pleased to see us.

I settled down at my desk with Sheila, who, like me it seemed, had been a Wren since the cradle, and we rustled with our compacts and compared lip-sticks. The rest of the party, a group of taciturn young women from London who had just joined, took out notebooks, pencils and here and there a pair of spectacles. We smiled encouragingly at them.

Our instructor draped his willow-like form over a table, took a teaching stick in his hand and surveyed his class. We were in for something, he could tell us—if we co-operated he could get us through the exam, if not . . . out. He clicked a sinister pair of fingers doorwards. Sheila and I stowed away our cosmetics as he fixed us with a beady eye. We loosened our collars and felt faintly shut in.

Now the problem of fire control, began the instructor, on a more cheerful note, was one of position to hit, anticipated by relative speed, range, direction of wind, etc. This seemed feasible enough, but his way of presenting it to us was somewhat obscure.

"Let us suppose," he said, "that you are walking with a friend down a country lane. There is a five-pound note lying on the ground and your friend wishes to pick it up. How will she do it?" It was obvious at this point that somebody had to be incredibly stupid, so after a quick look at the Londoners, who were chewing their pencils darkly, I said I supposed she would bend down and pick it up.

"Ah, ha!" The instructor rocked himself triumphantly—"but your friend, for the sake of argument, has no arms or legs—what then?" At this I packed up and asserted she wouldn't be down a country lane with me without arms or legs, and that was flat.

Sheila put forward the suggestion that she would verbally direct her to the five-pound note. This was better, allowed the instructor; unfortunately, however, he had omitted to mention the girl was deaf and dumb too. Sheila said very acidly "She's going to need that five quid."

I do not know to this day how a limbless, non-speaking, non-hearing unit was applied to naval gunnery tactics, unless it was by mathematical machinery and goodwill, but it was done to the satisfaction of the instructor, if not to ours.

We learned about gyro bearing, and were told that the Magnetic North Pole was never in the same place. This created much dissension. Sheila said "How foolish!" but the Londoners scribbled in their books, so I popped it down in my diary where it remained for the rest of the year.

We were then pushed into a steel box known as a Director which directs the fire of power-operated guns. It was very dark and very uncomfortable. We next learnt the quantities that make up gun-range. These were amazingly drawn out, and by the time we had finished the entire enemy fleet could have gone on a world cruise. Then we were introduced to a devilish machine the instructor lightly referred to as the T.S. It was crammed with dials and switches and hummed loudly when in action. Sheila and I stared down at it in the deepest depression.

This, said the instructor, was connected with the spotting-table, which was a highly-painted seascape at one end of a large room, where men pushed dummy battleships, whilst other men squatted in dummy directors, gave what I suppose amounted to dummy orders, and then engineered small explosions. The keynote to the whole affair was obviously imagination.

"Now," said the instructor, "we are going into action! The enemy ship has been sighted. What do we require to record on our T.S.?" To my horror one of the Londoners immediately and correctly supplied "Bearing of enemy ship."

"They understand," said Sheila blankly. Some coloured pointers swung around and quivered. I wondered what they indicated.

"Now, Mrs. Sinclair, what next?" I didn't know. I stared wildly at the table. "Wind," I said hopefully, as being the one homely thing I knew or remembered out of a welter of advanced knowledge. I was swept aside by someone else with "Range Rate" and another with "Clock Rate"; the T.S. was bubbling away . . .

"Now, Mrs. Sinclair—what about your wind?"

"All right," I said coyly. "Wind."

"What wind?" roared the instructor. I pondered, and then waved a hand towards the window vaguely.

"What about forty-five feet per second?" he prompted angrily.

"I don't know anything about forty-five feet per second," I replied humbly. The instructor furiously turned a handle and I gathered I had started a very small gale.

Apart from my accidentally leaning against the fire gong, the instruction passed peaceably and incomprehensibly on, and then, as if noticing a certain unhappiness in his class, the instructor said "Now we will all do a mock action. You two," turning to Sheila and myself, "not appearing to grasp the principles, had better be officers." Unworthy of anything else we slunk to the posts of Rate and Control Officers in a Director. A petty officer handed me a pair of binoculars. I stared unseeingly at the seascape opposite me. Not a thing in sight, so under direction I inquired through phones for the well-being of the T.S.

"Director T.S.?"

"T.S. well," came over the phone.

"Director well," I contributed. We were all apparently in the best of health. Then, through my binoculars, without any feeling of England expects, and only one of pure dread, I beheld the enemy wavering into sight, luckily at ninety degrees. Even I knew that.

I muttered to my rate officer, received a prod in the back from the petty officer and asked an imaginary captain permission to fire. There was the noise of a tea-tray dropping on to an asphalt court and a few splashes appeared near the enemy ship. This was really worth while. I gaily ordered another attack, more shell-splashes, more noise. Our instructor's voice came down the phones:

"Well, what are you going to do next?" Forgetting everything I called back "Be quiet! I haven't made up my mind." Then I ventured a zig-zag. I never really gathered what happened next or whether we ever shot the darn thing up, because before we had time to fire again it was Sheila's turn and we had to change places. We went from bad to worse. We did High Angle, we did Low Angle, ending with an eye-shooting film during which, pop-eyed with weariness, we all slept. So did the instructor.

o o

The Fond Mother

OH hurry home, you children, you lads and maidens all,

For the Stone Men, the silent ones, are sitting on the wall.

Their hands are huge and heavy that rest upon their knees,

Their heads are hewn from boulders, they are taller than the trees.

What do you say, Willie, the Stone Men do not move,
They are bogies of the witless, they have got into a groove?
Oh mark my words, Willie, heed well what I do say,
The Stone Men, the silent ones, will start to move some day.

What do you say, Tommie, the Stone Men are a sham,
If you saw them come towards you you would order them to scam?

Oh mark my words, Tommie, the day is drawing near
When the Stone Men shall waddle and the world shake with fear.

What do you say, Lizzie, the Stone Men are cold,
Like the tails of perished tadpoles and the hearts of the old?

Oh mark my words, Lizzie, the day will come soon
When the Stone Men go marching and the whole world will swoon.

What do you say, Katie, the Stone Men cannot rise,
For their legs are twined with ivy and they open not their eyes?

Oh mark my words, Katie, it is a watch they keep,
They are thinking, they are listening, they do not sleep.

Oh mark my words, children, I was once a fearless maid,
Though life has taught me little, I have learnt to be afraid;

The only thing that I have learnt, and so I teach it you—
If there's nothing else to tremble at, the Stone Men will do.

But We Digress.

THE speakers in to-night's Wednesday Forum are Homer Nodds, M.P.; Rann Amok, author and film-director; and A. F. W. Dunderhead, M.P. They are going to discuss the Russian reply to the Icelandic Note about the watercress beds of South Whirrucks. Nodds, will you begin?

Well, of course I suppose I have been asked to come here to-night because I'm only just back from a visit to the South Whirrucks watercress beds, but what I want to say is of course that it doesn't make the slightest difference where watercress beds are. We all know of course that whatever is said about them by Iceland or anyone else, the Russian reply will bring in the question of the Eskimo refusal to take part in the organized world-wide planting of mustard. Mustard is of course the key to the whole situation, and nobody but fanatical objectors to Icelandic watercress can possibly deny it.

Thank you. Amok?

The fact that Nodds should have so gratuitously introduced the subject of mustard seems to me, if I may say so, to sum up the weakness of his party at the present time. I'm not here as a politician, no doubt I can leave Dunderhead to dispose of Nodds's arguments from that angle, but the angle I am here from is that I do know what—I mean, at the present time, it is a gratuitous insult to introduce, if I may say so, at the present time, the question of mustard, which is at the present time a gratuitous insult to the hard-working watercress-producers of this country. At the present time. Turning to the Russian reply, I can only say I was very much surprised to read in my paper this evening that it had been made.

Well, you know, I feel—

Dunderhead?

Well, you know, I feel we're rather losing sight of the main issue, which as I see it is whether there is or is not to be in South Whirrucks a thriving watercress industry, and whether, if there is, Iceland is to take any hand in world reactions to it. I must say I was, um, very surprised to hear Nodds say just now that it doesn't make any difference where watercress beds are. Surely the whole, um, point about watercress beds in South Whirrucks is that they aren't in North Whirrucks. I see Nodds looking dubious, but—

I wasn't looking dubious, I was looking puzzled, which is of course a very different thing. I can of course well understand that Dunderhead's party would wish to spread the idea that of course there should be no watercress beds in North Whirrucks, but the whole aim of my party as Dunderhead of course knows very well is to encourage the Icelandic growers of watercress, and if that can be done without at the same time encouraging North Whirrucks I should like to know what can't. What I mean is, though I suppose neither Dunderhead nor Amok will admit it, is—

Well, at the present time I don't admit it, and I don't see why Nodds should expect Dunderhead to, either, at the present time. It seems to me quite gratuitous for Nodds to introduce from his angle the question of North Whirrucks, which—

It wasn't me, it was Dunderhead.

Well, whoever introduces it at the present time, it seems to me an angle that ought not to be gratuitously introduced. Don't you agree, Dunderhead?

Certainly I do, but I did, um, feel that Nodds's suggestion that my party wishes to, um, spread the idea that North Whirrucks ought to be entirely, um, deprived of watercress beds, which I presume could hardly be done without, um, a coalition of the watercress-producing nations, and that would need the blessing of Russia, ought to be, um, answered—

Oh, come, Dunderhead can't of course get away with the statement that Russia's blessing would be needed for a coalition of watercress-producers. When I said that the key to the whole situation was mustard, what I had in mind of course was Russian mustard. My talks with the watercress-growers of South Whirrucks made it of course perfectly obvious to me, though I dare say not to Amok—

I don't see why Nodds should single me out at the present time with the gratuitous suggestion that I refuse to admit the obvious. I think that from my angle, though I'm not here as a politician, the point at the present time is nothing more nor less than the way Nodds gratuitously introduces the subject of mustard. Whether it's Russian mustard or anyone else's mustard makes very little difference at the present time—Dunderhead will agree with me when I say that gratuitously introducing it makes an unfortunate angle.

Certainly, I couldn't agree more, but still I, um, want to take up Nodds's point about Russia's blessing. I do most, um, emphatically insist that Russia's blessing would be needed for a watercress coalition.

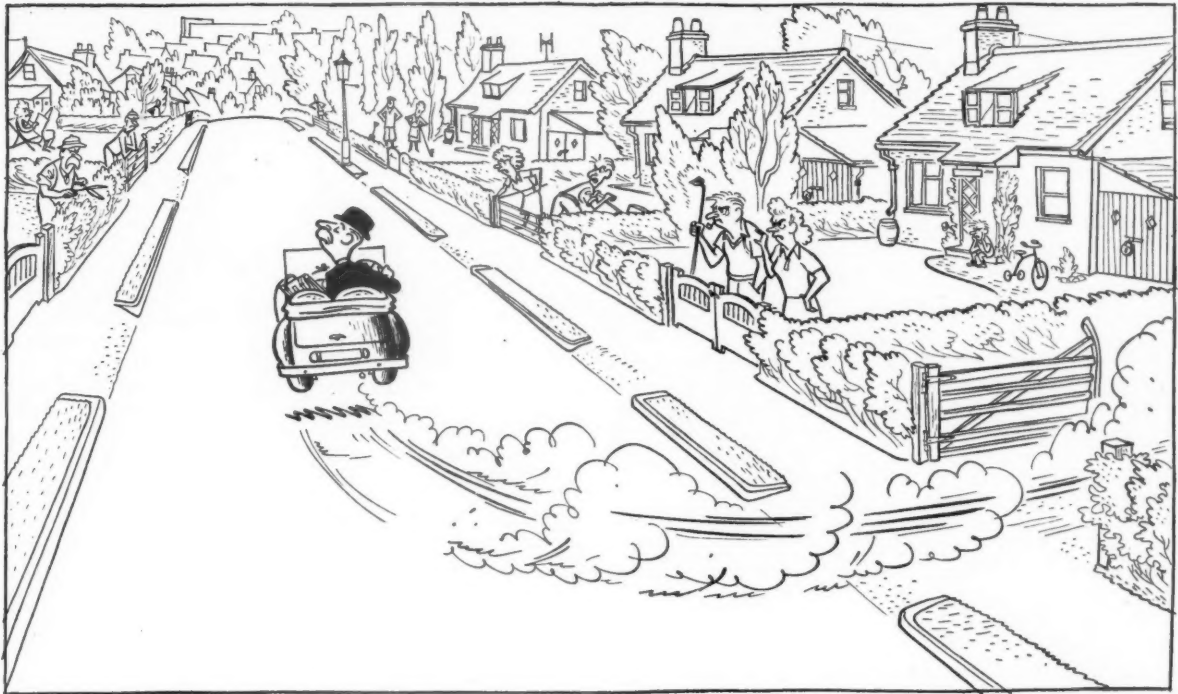
And of course I categorically deny that.

In Wednesday Forum you heard Homer Nodds, M.P.; Rann Amok; and A. F. W. Dunderhead, M.P. They were talking about the Russian reply to the Icelandic Note about the watercress beds of South Whirrucks, it says here.

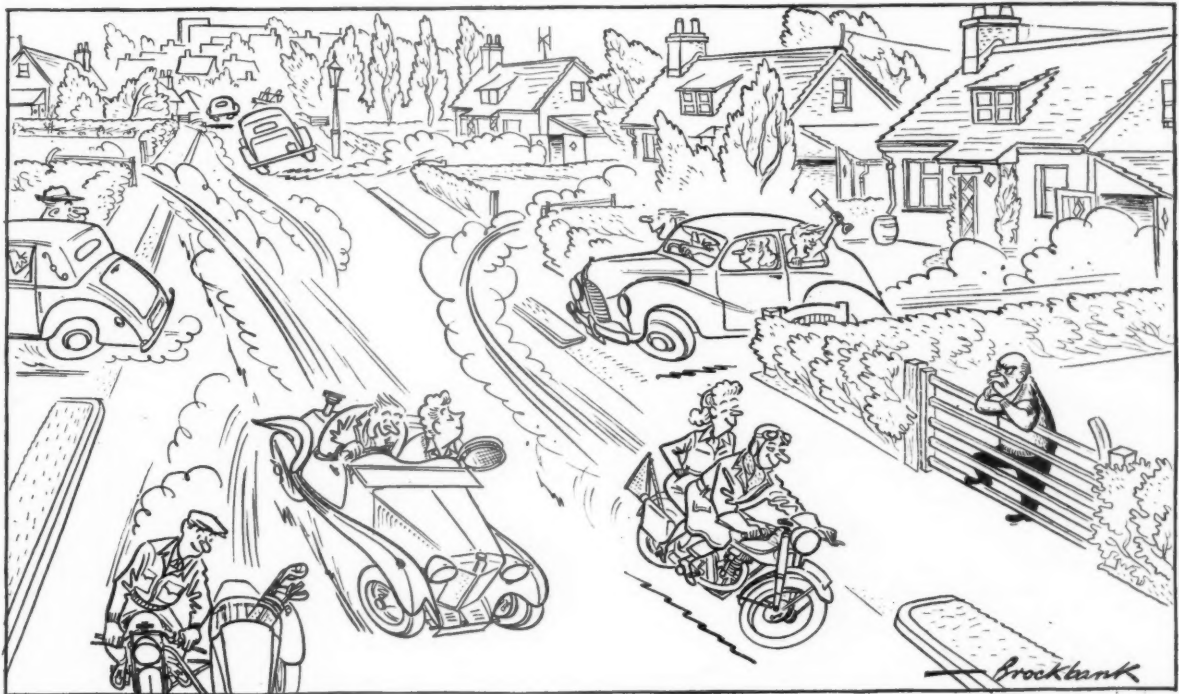
R. M.



"Sorry we are so full at the Rectory, but just ring if you want anything."



BUSINESS



PLEASURE

An Innocent in Canada

IV—The Luck of the Roaring Lumber-Camp

(Mr. Punch's Special Correspondent is spending a few weeks in Canada.)

THE whistle of a C.P.R. locomotive moaning over the prairies must be just about the loneliest sound in the world. Whistle is not the right word though: the noise is a great, gruff, deep-bellied roar, awful in its power yet somehow infinitely sad. Prairies is not the right word either, but it will have to do. Lying there in my little lower berth I could hear the monster calling to the lone rangers, lone trappers, farmers and lumbermen, growling its greeting. I brooded on the primitiveness of life in the wide primeval places, pulled the sheets up round my neck and listened contentedly to the snoring of the Winnipegger just above me.

I brooded in ignorance. The prairies of to-day are not, it now appears, the prairies of film and fiction. The



"... hears the roar of the C.P.R. ..."

ploughman no longer plods his weary way: he tours his section in a streamlined, push-button tractor, sheltered from the elements by a plastic cupola and entertained by radio. After a good breakfast he reaches for his paper, drives out from the farmstead (he has another address in the city four hundred to eight hundred miles away) and ploughs, sows or harvests at great speed without once coming into physical contact with the soil. He could farm just as effectively in top-hat, white tie and tails. He still grumbles of course. The "Glosso-Paste" half-hour of concert-music was terrible, he tells his wife, the "Willie Branson" programme wasn't worth listening to. No, the prairie farmers don't do too badly, even if I am exaggerating and in spite of the so-called bureaucratic stranglehold of Ottawa. One of them gave me a lift in his glittering American roadster and complained bitterly about the design of British cars. "Why don't you fix 'em wider so's they'll fit into our ruts?" he said.

And what about the lumber-camps? Are they really so very tough? Well, they're air-conditioned for a start. A Federal law sees to that. And they're equipped with all modern conveniences—electricity, radio, film-projectors, everything. The lumbermen and their wives have excellent

private apartments, sit at small tables in the restaurant, "Eat-o-mat" or "Food-a-Thou," and eat from limitless supplies of steak and ice-cream. Their children attend the camp school. And another thing, the camps are dry: no liquor. So there's another illusion gone. Your great hairy-chested he-man hears the roar of the C.P.R. as he helps to wind his wife's knitting-wool and sips his coke.

This doesn't mean that the lumberman is mollycoddled exactly, or is entirely abstemious. Earning \$15 to \$20 a day he can afford a spree every so often in the big city. I hope he isn't milked too easily by the city sharks, but the number of "Welcome, Stranger" signs in Winnipeg (to say nothing of the "Cup Readings Daily" notices) makes me a little afraid for him.

In Ottawa somebody referred to a certain politician as a "Judas-ram" and I've now discovered what the term means. In the great abattoirs of Canada nothing is wasted. "The profit," as they say, "is in the pig's tail." So to save power they slaughter the animals on the top floor of the factory and process and can them as they move down and out under gravity. A further economy is that the condemned can climb to the place of execution under their own power. Their last journey is along a sort of ramp or gangway. Now, the cattle walk this plank without any trouble, but the sheep need leading. So they are provided with a guide, a ram painted bright blue behind the ears. The Judas-ram reaches the summit, steps nimbly aside and trots back into circulation by a detour. His work is done. And it goes hard, I can tell you, with the slaughterer who fails to recognize those bright-blue patches.

Full as I am with the lore of the West, I find it difficult, just for this week, to summon up much enthusiasm for Canadian city-life. Fort William was only just recovering from its winter hibernation. The city's camp at Chippewa Park—"Take a tip from the ducks and geese . . . Don't let the heat get you down . . . Come up to the North . . ." log cabins, lodge, rustic dining-hall, zoo, dancing pavilion, swimming, boating, yachting, etc.—was not yet open. The hockey (ice-hockey to you) season had ended: the baseball season had not yet begun. There wasn't very much for the innocent to do in the brilliant sunshine other than tremble in the bitterly cold wind. And there didn't seem so very much more for the citizens themselves to do either. On a Saturday afternoon when the Australians were presumably cutting some county's bowling to ribbons, the shoe-shine and barber-shops of Fort William and Port Arthur were crowded four-deep.

On Sunday the city slept as peacefully as any English town, but at midnight there were long queues waiting for the cinemas to reopen for the first show of the new week.

After a journey by bus over what must be the bumpiest and dustiest road in Ontario I climbed Mount McKay (1,581 feet). The walk began with a mirage. Before me lay a road cut perfectly straight through the forest. In the sparkling atmosphere I could see my objective very clearly at the end of a tunnel of conifer. After half an hour of brisk effort the objective was still brilliantly clear but only imperceptibly larger. It was the same after an hour when I turned away disgusted and smashed my way into the undergrowth. Canada's roads and railways are much too straight. Her farms are too square. I find myself longing for the inconsequential geometry of the English countryside—boundary commissions notwithstanding.

Have you ever been chased by butterflies and dragonflies? It happened to me on Mt. McKay. Great beasts they were too, as fierce and fearless as when they did battle against the Ojibway Indians. It was my blooding as a big-game hunter. On the summit of the mountain—well, the first ledge—I found a little stone chapel, a shrine that is visited by the Indians every year at Thanksgiving. It commemorates the legendary heroism of the Indian princess who cut strips of flesh from her legs, gave them to the fishermen of her tribe and so saved her people from starvation.

From the same ledge Thunder Bay and its giant grain elevators gleam in the sun. To the east lies Lake Superior, incredibly blue and vast. They keep it at or near freezing-point, I understand, throughout the year to improve the quality of the trout. To north and west lies a magnificent wilderness of forest and lake, threaded with swift, quicksilver rivers and teeming with game and fish of endless variety. To the south lies Loch Lomond, and beyond that the Pigeon River separating Canada from Minnesota, U.S.A.

These grain elevators are the largest in the world and hold 92,855,000 Imperial bushels, or one bushel for every mile from the earth to the sun. In spite of this, hay-fever is unknown in the area. You see, the whole region is "air-conditioned by the sparkling blue waters of Lake Superior." "He who drinks from the water that flows from the mountain of the Great Thunder Bird" (my Mount McKay), says an old Indian proverb, "will not find contentment until he returns to drink of it again." I can well believe it. Fort William gets its water on the cheap—pre-cooled, filtered and treated by Nature—from a mountain lake. They don't even have to boost the pressure, and the stuff is crystal clear, cold and as soft as rain water. Whether it mixes well or not I couldn't say: Fort William isn't very lavish with firewater—and hasn't been ever



"... one bushel for every mile from the earth to the sun."

since the shameful days of the old prospectors. It was Scotch firewater, remember, poured down the throat of a poor Sioux Indian, that caused Nanna Bijou, Spirit of the Deep Sea hunter, to turn into stone. He lies there just across Thunder Bay, an awful warning to the intemperate. There is a special section for "Mc" in the list of Fort William's streets and it is longer than any other. They're all here, the McGregors, McDonalds, McTavishes,

McPhersons and the rest, along with the Campbells and the Camerons. They make this business of the firewater all the more puzzling to the innocent.

I warmly approve, by the way, of the local paper which is conducting a campaign against the worst Americanisms





"Of course, it's a basement flat, and a bit damp, but there is a lift."

To My Leech—A Last Adjuration

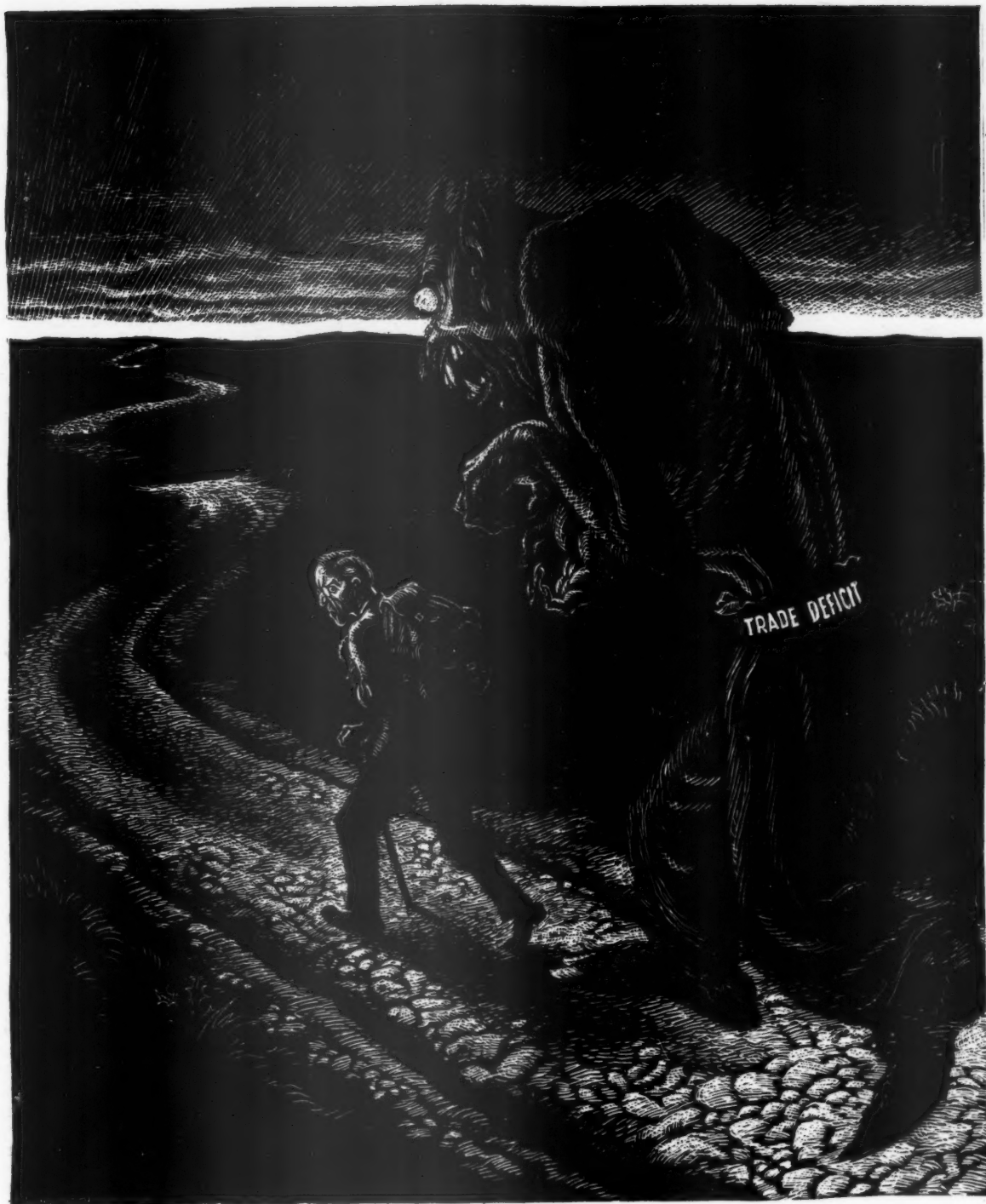
NAY, doctor, be not thus unkind,
 Envenom not our joy;
 Change even now your honoured mind
 And be our Bevan Boy!
 For twenty years our fragile clay
 Has known your fostering care;
 And now, at this late hour of day,
 Must my catarrh and I convey
 Our patronage elsewhere?

You loved us once; full oft you caught
 Our music from afar
 And inly chuckled at the thought,
 "Tis he and his catarrh!"
 And you would greet us with delight
 And ask us in to tea,
 And sit till late into the night
 To hear the tales I would recite
 Of my catarrh and me.

And now upon some stranger's hands
 It seems we shall be thrust,
 Who neither cares nor understands
 How precious is his trust;
 Some less benign Hippocrates,
 Of sombre soul and grim,
 Will hear our music on the breeze
 And growl "Confusion take that sneeze—
 'Tis his catarrh and him!"

What horror in the way of pills
 Will such a one prescribe?
 What lymphs from what satanic rills
 Constrain us to imbibe?
 Nay, we have worse to apprehend,
 Frail creatures that we are:
 Without your counsel to befriend
 Who knows but haply I shall end
 By losing my catarrh?

M. H. L.



A FRIGHTFUL FIEND

"Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread . . ."

TUESDAY, May 25th.—

The late Mr. Scrooge (in the days before his dream) could scarcely have worn a more misanthropic expression or adopted a more rasping tone than did Mr. HAROLD WILSON, President of the Board of Trade, in making some clothing-coupon concessions to-day.

He made his announcement with such a reluctant and grumpy air and with such a wealth of irrelevant accusation against the Press, the clothing trade and anyone else within range, that most of the pleasure was taken out of the concessions. Mr. OLIVER LYTTTELTON, indeed, speaking for the Conservative Opposition, gave the gift horse a good hard stare in the molars—and announced that he did not think much of the gift or of the giver.

At which Mr. WILSON smiled sourly. There had been reports that the President had made the concessions on instructions "from above" and against his own will. His manner certainly seemed to confirm these reports.

Mr. HERBERT BUTCHER opened the discussion on behalf of the Liberal Nationals, demanding some coupon concessions, if only to get rid of the mountains of clothing that lay in the warehouses. The whole thing, said he, was a muddle—which was perhaps explained by the fact that (with a brief exception just before the last election) there had been no business man at the head of the Board of Trade in the last six years.

Quite nasty, he was—but then Mr. WILSON got up and showed the House that in that respect it hadn't seen nuthin' yet. From the first words of his long speech the President made it plain that he was in a bad temper. He met the charge of muddling the clothing rationing scheme by blaming the Press for publishing news of the possible grant of concessions. And (apparently as a sort of alternative pleading) he blamed the clothing trade for having said anything to the Press about the possibility. The two—Press and trade—were jointly charged with messing things up generally, to the injury of the innocent B. of T.

He went on to make a few concessions. Two crimson vouchers in the clothing book were to be made available as a bonus, value twelve coupons. Men's ties, gloves, and knitting yarns were to be made coupon-free, and men's shirts were to go up from five coupons to seven each. Complicated things were to happen about women's stockings.

There were a few groans from the

Impressions of Parliament

Tuesday, May 25th.—House of Lords: Petrol—Taken as Red.
House of Commons: A Win on Points.

Wednesday, May 26th.—House of Lords: A House Party is Discussed.

House of Commons: Assorted Legislation.

Thursday, May 27th.—House of Commons: Fun About the Past.

Labour benches, so Mr. WILSON switched to the never-failing piece about the alleged inability of workers, under former Governments, to buy any clothes at all. That gained a faint, small cheer from his side and a sour laugh from the Opposition. A reference to the "hysterical organs of the Press" (which rarely fails to get an all-Party cheer) fell rather flat, possibly because Members found it a little difficult to relate it to the matter in hand.

The nearest approach to enthusiasm was aroused by the announcement



Impressions of Parliamentarians

45. Mr. G. Tomlinson
Minister of Education

that "bargain sales," with prices and coupon values cut by half, were to be allowed.

The debate was on "thank-you-for-nothing" lines, with nearly every speaker complaining about the President's stinginess. It was right at the end of the discussion that Mr. WILSON promised a few more concessions (possibly) later on. And as hope is a considerable element in politics this helped to gain a victory for the Government (by 231 votes to 112) on a proposal to cut the Board of Trade's ration of cash from the Revenue.

Before the discussion on clothes, Mr. CHURCHILL had asked for a statement on the position in Palestine, to receive the reply from Mr. ERNEST BEVIN, the Foreign Secretary, that the time was not appropriate, as there were still hopes that a truce between Jews and Arabs might be arranged.

Mr. CHURCHILL was swift to see the justice of this claim, but asked that a full statement should be made as soon as circumstances permitted. This Mr. BEVIN promised, and added that, regarding the impartiality of his policy as between Jews and Arabs, his conscience

was clear.

Their Lordships were considering, in committee, the Bill to make all "commercial" petrol red and to impose almost any sentence short of boiling in crude oil on those who are found with red petrol in a private tank. The Lord Chancellor put everybody in a good humour by accepting a number of amendments designed to protect the interests of those private motorists whose consciences might be white though their petrol were red—in other words, those who might accidentally or innocently have commercial petrol in private tanks.

The fact that the Government had rejected the self-same proposals in the other House, as being mere wrecking amendments, seemed not to trouble (or puzzle) anyone.

WEDNESDAY, May 26th.—This morning Mr. Speaker laid the foundation-stone of the new House of Commons on the site of the House destroyed by a German bomb on the night of May 10th 1941. He—and Mr. ATTLEE, Mr. CHURCHILL and Lord WINTERTON—all spoke of the House as the home of freedom of speech.

This afternoon, as if to prove that this was no mere figure of speech, the House of Commons seemed to be in turbulent mood. Some of the "rebel" Labour Members (whose ebullience had been "managed" by the platform at last week's Party Conference at Scarborough) showed that they were still capable of considerable naughtiness.

Mr. ERNEST BEVIN, the Foreign Secretary, announced that fewer than forty British officers were working with the Arab forces engaged in hostilities in the Middle East, and when he went on to develop this statement, in reply to supplementary questions, there was uproar on the Labour back benches.

For a moment the Minister was unable to make himself heard, and then he snapped: "If I am out of order, Mr. Speaker, you will order me to sit down. I was not aware, sir, that your functions had been transferred to the back benches!"

He continued his statement to an accompaniment of interjections from his friends and an occasional cheer from his political "enemies" opposite. The



"I told you they were overdoing this 'Come to Britain' propaganda."

statement was to the effect that Britain's military assistance to the Arab countries was under treaty obligations, which would continue until the United Nations decided that the Arabs were acting contrary to the aims of the United Nations.

Half the Labour Members jumped up excitedly to put questions and to raise points of order, but Mr. Speaker said that he thought the House had better get on with other work. A storm of protesting "points of order" did not alter this decision and, grumbling, the protesters went on to the next business.

This was a series of small but doubtless important legislative items which used up the evening.

The Other Place was also having a mixed grill, the most interesting item in which was a discussion on the new methods of choosing our Civil Servants—by means of "house-party" examinations. It appeared that the examinees are lured by Civil Service Commission sirens to a remote country house, detained there for forty-eight hours, subjected to psychiatry, psychology and other modern forms of intimidation, and then turned out again into the cold, cruel world.

Some few pass this gruelling test and

become our rulers. More, far more, do not.

Problem: Is it a good idea, or a bad one, to select the high-ups of Whitehall by these methods?

Around that problem controversy raged. Some noble Lords said it was a good idea, producing just the kind of devil-may-care, daunted-by-nothing person needed in modern Government service. Others declared that it favoured the "Smart Aleck" type and the survival of the slickest. The critics alleged that a famous psychiatrist who, incognito, submitted himself to the tests was classed as "definitely below normal" by his fellow-practitioners. Which appeared to prove something or other.

However, the Government said it was as good a method as anyone could work out at present and the House (of Lords) Party dispersed. We shall probably not know, until the long-promised Lords reform plans come along, how many members of the party have been "failed," how many (if any) will be selected as our rulers.

THURSDAY, May 27th.—There was talk about the famous "Nenni Telegram" affair in the Commons.

But it all seemed like a discussion on the affairs of the ancient Greeks and Romans, so swiftly do events move these days.

Conservatives had fun at the expense of the Governmental Party managers. And Mr. PLATTS-MILLS, now an expelled member of the Labour Party, had fun at the expense of everybody. But it did not lead anywhere. Which seemed to please Mr. HERBERT MORRISON more than somewhat.

Country House Week-End

A NEW Civil Service examiner Who spent a week-end with an elephant

Was highly impressed with its stamina, Though its answers were largely irrelevant.

He sent a report on this candidate, And after exhaustive discussions The authorities finally landed it In Moscow for talks with the Russians. M. H.

"Percy, a large porcupine, breaks loose, charging backward—the usual technique for quill attacks . . ."—Daily paper.

Not with our quill-drivers.



LANDSCAPE WITH TREES

The Courtauld Collection

THE attendances so far at the Samuel Courtauld Memorial Exhibition at the Tate Gallery suggest that this wonderful assembly of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist pictures is enjoying little more than a modest *succès d'estime*. I wonder why. Is it because the collection lacks the sensational appeal of old masters wearing New Looks, or some Russian Cinquevalli defying the laws of gravity? Or is it due to the mistaken belief that the exhibition is little more than an extension of works which (thanks to Courtauld's generosity) have long been familiar to Tate visitors?

Let me remove any doubts there may be by saying at once that the pictures from Courtauld's private collection, as well as those he later gave to the Courtauld Institute, are worthy companions of such Tate masterpieces as Renoir's "La Première Sortie," Manet's "La Serveuse de Bocks," and Utrillo's "Place du Tertre." Some idea of the exhibition's importance can be gained when one mentions that here, for the first time, are assembled twelve Cézannes representative of all his phases, eleven works by the pointilliste master Seurat, seven by Renoir, five by Manet, and six by Van Gogh; and these include not only canvases long familiar through reproductions but equal masterpieces which, but for the accident of private possession, would be as justly well known.

In reviewing work which covers the formative decades

in the history of modern painting it is a natural temptation to consider the precursors and successors of the Impressionists and observe how certain modes of expression were anticipated or inherited. But with such academic considerations one guesses that Courtauld himself was very little concerned. The instinct which prompted him to acquire Camille Pissaro's late painting of the Louvre, seen from the Ile St. Louis, was surely an immediate appreciation of its exquisite and subtle tones—an instinct which served him as happily in his choice of Cézanne's early "L'Etang des Sœurs at Osny." That Cézanne was then evidently under the older artist's spell is a circumstance which, as likely as not, never occurred to the collector.

The critic then, like the visitor, would be wise to forget labels and influences and enjoy these works—as one may be sure Courtauld did—for their unexpected revelations of beauty. Here (to mention a few less familiar pictures) are two breezy beach scenes by the Honfleurais painter Boudin, a sensitive and sparing Degas, "Two Dancers on the Stage," and Lautrec's masterly "Jane Avril leaving the Moulin Rouge," in pastel and oil on mill-board, surely one of the savagest studies in his Parisian portrait gallery.

It is just such an exhibition as this one—which I certainly intend to revisit before it closes at the end of August—that makes a critic proud of his calling.

N. A. D. W.

And Don't Listen to Lord Tennyson.

COME up, oh maid, to yonder mountain height,
What pleasure dwells down here (the cragsman sang)
Scorn the base concourse of the huddled town
Stifling in depths of vitiated warmth;
Leave unaspiring levels, where each step
Brings you no nearer heaven than the last!
Abandon tamed and timid gradients to wheels;
Quit the dead pavement and the walled-in way,
The hedge-cramped garden, where the spirit longs
For space and the expanse of sky in vain—
And, singing, lace your boots for the high hills
Without you lonely—faithful boots fierce-fanged
To grasp the granite of the giddy ledge
And grip the grind-stones of the grumbling scree;
Spurn the town's formal flattery of flowers,
Ephemeral beauties—fade them with a frown
And come with me, where round your conquering feet

Shall storm-defiant saxifrages glow,
And where, unwearied, you'll be woo'd to rest
By rich moss-cushions, emerald, crimson, gold.
There waits awed silence for the wind's wild harp,
And echo, to learn laughter from your mirth.
Come, where to sun-brimmed corries gazing down
You'll see the torrent's flash, too far to hear,
And, with my rope safe-girdled, know the pride
That plays with plunging perpendiculars!
Come, breathe a tingling crispness of bright air
Fresh as the dawns of Eden; match your eyes
With the ethereal blue of shadowed snow
Against the sun-blaze on the rippled drift.
There will your heart in aspiration leap
Up, ever upwards with the mountain hare!
Come, the rocks call; the curved snow-cornice calls
And I your guide, and the last crag's notched crest
That lifts the cairn, ice-crystalled, to the sky! W. K. H.

More Learning

TODAY I shall return to the subject of learning and begin with the reverse side, teaching. The thing about teachers is their knowledge, which is developed to the point of inhumanity. My teaching readers must not think that I am calling them inhuman, that I imagine they don't drop saucers or believe that Shakespeare never had any hair in front. What I want to convey is the attitude of the taught, to whom red ink handwriting could never be blue-black and a geography expert eating a sandwich off-stage is a news story. The qualifications for teaching include a brisk mental line, not minding being faced by desks, and a talent for writing large with chalk; but the most important is of course the imparting of the information which has to be got across. In retrospect this consists of reading aloud, being dictated to, putting a hand up and watching someone else being asked to open the window; none of which gives any clue to the skilled process that teaching undoubtedly is. My readers will come nearer it if they try to imagine themselves giving a history lesson, when they will realize that anyone afraid of being listened to when talking is not cut out for teaching.

So far I have been talking about the school sort of teaching; but quite a lot goes on in the home at quite an advanced stage of life—for example, omelet-making, though it is not entirely accurate to say that people teach other people to make omelets; rather, they demonstrate. They make the omelet as they would ordinarily and explain, as they would ordinarily if anyone was watching (and with omelets, statisticians tell us, someone nearly always is), that this time they have put too much salt in and not got the frying-pan hot enough. The result may or may not be as tough as they foretell for safety's sake, but it is eaten as enthusiastically as anyone eats anything made from eggs, with a well-turned compliment during the first mouthful, and an epilogue. I must mention here one of the lesser difficulties of the cooking world—the tendency of the omelet-maker's own omelet to be the better of the two (scientists say that this has nothing to do with Life, it is simply that a frying-pan gets hotter as it goes on), but, because of this omelet's equal tendency to be smaller, it cannot be swopped.

NOW let us move on to some more about learning; to learning in the sense of being learned, a word which in this case I urge my readers to pronounce as two syllables if they want to do me justice. I propose to say something

about those scholars who edit works with footnotes fairly distilling authority and printed so small as to drive a really sleepy reader nearly frantic; it being, psychologists tell us, the people who read in bed who find themselves compelled to mill over footnotes they could meet as equals in the morning. As for the scholars themselves, they are rather hazily conjured up in the public's mind as wearing something dark and tidy, as being as likely to own a library as any other private citizen, and as being rather frightening to meet at a party, where it is so easy to appear ignorant when the main idea is to keep the conversation going. Scientists, though as learned as anyone, make a homelier mental picture; there is an idea that they wear untidy grey clothes—I mean off duty, the public has seen enough pictures of scientists to know that at work they wear white coats with high non-existent collars and stand habitually with a test-tube at arm's length—and that they are rather cheery folk, this idea being got from the little jokes they make when they talk on the wireless.

Going back to learning in its ordinary sense, I should like to end with a bit about the people who in adult life suddenly decide to learn things. It often comes over people that they could learn some new language from some little book which they embark on in a special mood of summoned intelligence. The people who go through with this endeavour start at the beginning of the book; psychologists have a word to say about the ones who make for the list of words at the end—some so like English as to make the project a snip—and think they have done a good evening's work by covering alternate halves of the page with a hand and wondering what is underneath it; these are the people who will end by keeping the book in their bookshelves, like a book. Talking of books, I must mention the people who own a set of Scott and suddenly decide to make the most of it; they are notable for the attention they attract in the home, being unable to pick up a volume without being asked by everyone, every evening, which it is now, but to the general surprise enjoying themselves very much in a quiet, non-committal way. And, talking of quiet, I should like to remind my readers that in many a boxroom lurks a silent ukulele (you could hardly expect it to be anything else with no one there to play it), that strange violin-shaped banjo on which they once learnt, so quickly and encouragingly, to play the three easy chords. ANDE.

At the Play

Maid To Measure (CAMBRIDGE)—*Calypso* (PLAYHOUSE)

I GATHER *Maid To Measure* at the Cambridge is much better than it was at Hammersmith. It would still benefit by the addition of wit and the subtraction of sugar. Miss JESSIE MATTHEWS, round whom the show has been written by a team too numerous to mention, is at times almost smothered in sentimentalism of the stickiest kind. If either of the satiric Hermiones should appear in the stalls I hope she

if anyone asks how, remember Herbert Farjeon. When she has an opportunity for gaiety, as in the pleasing "Oy-Oy, Sarah," Miss MATTHEWS is far more effective, and all through this programme her dancing is delightful.

But if there is a shortage of wit in the lyrics, there is an abundance of humour in the show generally, and this is put across by exceptionally sound practitioners. Mr. LEW PARKER,

from America, is the sort of gentle, confident comedian you warm to as a friend before he has even begun to be funny; and he can be very funny, mainly in his own crisp, personal nonsense. But his good nature seems to permeate the whole team. With him is Mr. TOMMY FIELDS, also a humorist of precision, who gives a spirited rag of Miss Blandish and demonstrates his special technique of all-in-singing, certain abdominal knots apparently producing certain notes. And then, for full weight, there are Mr.



[Calypso]

THE DARK FANTASTIC

Amanda Miss MABEL LEE
Napoleon Mr. EDRIC CONNOR

will be taken for a walk during a song entitled "Time May Change," in which Miss MATTHEWS, as a bride waiting to go to the church, poses before a dim Gothic window reciting the amorous clichés of the romantic paper-back—the bride's father having forgivably tip-toed away, presumably in search of stimulant. This was depressing, but only a trifle more so than a scene in which a honeymoon couple, gloriously unaware of Mr. Bevan and the Ministries of This and That, plan a love-nest on the extreme edge of a high cliff, neither of them pausing in their nursery rhapsodies to assess its slender chances of not falling into the sea. Every revue must of course make its appeals to the heart, but let sentiment have some intelligence behind it; and

JOHNNY BRANDON and Mr. ROBERT DORNING, both very bright and agile; Miss CHRISTINE SPENCER and Mr. TERENCE DELANEY, who entertain us with slightly more serious dancing and look as if they enjoy it, which makes all the difference; lest the claims of South American rhythm be forgotten, there is the flashing Miss LOLITA CORDOBA, and for those who like the modern squealing kind of foolery—I must confess I don't—there is Miss JOAN HEAL.

The music seemed to me dull, but the eye is given plenty of good colour and contrast. Several sketches, such as the Soho shop where the English visitor is treated with suspicion as a foreigner, are quite amusing, but the one that stands out is an inspired piece

of imbecility in which a snack-bar attendant of integrity vies with a customer of equal moral calibre to prove a soul above money, until the air is thick with buns and pound-notes. This is the real stuff.

Calypso, at the Playhouse, is a rare muddle, not without rewards. Mr. HEDLEY BRIGGS, who devised it, seems to have felt that, given enough native nuggets, all would, *calypso facto*, as it were, be well; but there are too many nuggets, and strung on a childishly simple string of English farce they are hardly seen to advantage. One moment we are up to our necks in aboriginal frolics, our eyes dazzled by colour and all our senses reeling, and the next the narcotic pulsations of the West Indies have miraculously made way for the mild inanities of a story about a white girl absurdly rebuffing her sailor lover.

The native part of this extraordinary potpourri is in the hands of coloured performers with an unfailing sense of their own strange rhythms but unable to make their voices carry clearly enough through the clatter of the band. Both tom-tom and tum-tum are freely exercised. Juju wriggling is unconfined, and some of the dances are either exciting, or beautiful, or both, according to your fancy. The music of the black races having captured the young of the white, the latter will find much of this show to their taste, though even they, I think, will feel it goes on too long.

A calypso is a working-off of personal steam, sung with suitable contortions to home-made music. As an art-form it appears to possess the elasticity for which many of us strive in vain: "I am writing this on my knee in a train between Reading and Oxford, and though there are big clouds in the sky and grit in the lettuce of my sandwich my heart flies upwards when I consider how British Railways bowl along in spite of everything." If you get a friend to bang steadily on the bath while you perform the more esoteric slimming drills and intone all that with moderate passion, you have an authentic calypso.

Miss MABEL LEE, as a night-club star from Haarlem, and Miss EVELYN DOVE, as the stately queen of the plantation, are top scorers. Mr. EDRIC CONNOR is personally impressive but vocally disappointing. The English brigade, led bravely by Miss MOYA NUGENT, are really beside the point. And are we to understand that British sailors now speak of each other as "guys" and say "I guess"? ERIC.

At the Ballet

Job (COVENT GARDEN)
The Sleeping Princess
 (GAUMONT STATE, KILBURN)

FOR the benefit of their Benevolent Fund, Sadler's Wells Ballet recently revived *Job*—BLAKE'S Vision of the Book of Job translated into a Masque for Dancing, by GEOFFREY KEYNES, VAUGHAN WILLIAMS and NINETTE DE VALOIS. This revival was given with new settings and costumes by JOHN PIPER.

It is of course impossible to realize on the stage BLAKE's apocalyptic vision in all its fullness and its intricate symbolism; none the less the Masque presents the main argument in broad outline and with great dignity and sincerity, and the noble music raises it to the plane of a spiritual epic—the sphere of BLAKE's vision and of the Book of Job itself. *Job* still remains by far the greatest British contribution to the art of the dance. A personality of great spiritual force—the composer—has bent himself to the task of expressing a profound truth, and NINETTE DE VALOIS—the choreographer—has risen to the heights demanded of her.

The stage pictures in *Job* keep faithfully to the spirit of BLAKE. At the beginning *Job* is seen seated under a tree with musical instruments hanging on its boughs. He is in the sunset of worldly prosperity, surrounded by his sons and daughters, who dance a pastoral dance. The moon is rising—the moon representing worldly passions and desires. We see then the dethronement of *Job's* Godhead, his higher self, by *Satan*, Materialism, who remains in possession of the throne of his soul until, after sore trials, *Job* is convinced by *Elihu* of his sin of spiritual pride. *Satan* is thrown out of Heaven and the Godhead reigns once more; and *Job* and his family worship while the Sons of the Morning dance their heavenly dance. This scene is inspired by the most wonderful of all BLAKE's *Job* engravings—that in which the Godhead, in the act of Spiritual Creation and attended by Seraphs, stretches out his arms over *Job*, the horses of Instruction being driven by the Mind and the serpents of the Passions reined in by Woman's Love. In the last scene *Job* sits surrounded by his children as the sun of spiritual regeneration rises and the moon of worldly desire sets.

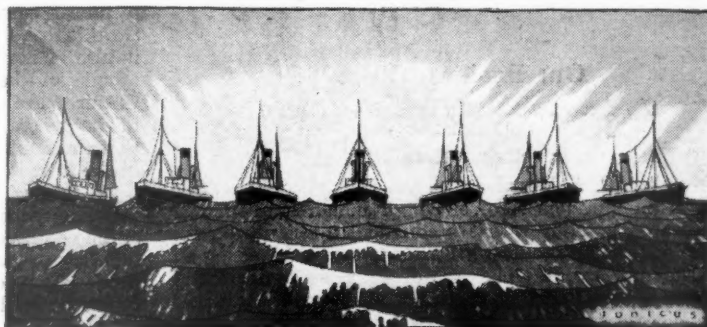
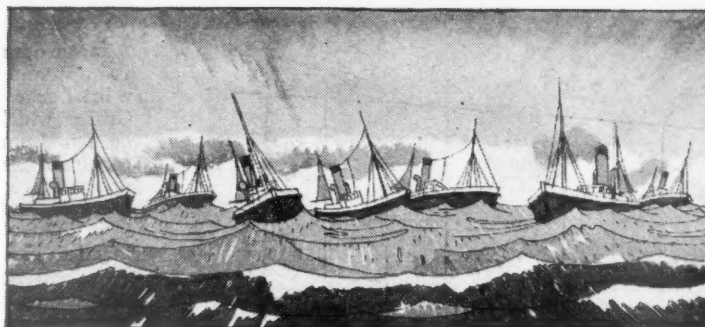
JOHN PIPER's new designs are highly successful.

ROBERT HELPMANN dances the rôle of *Satan* in the Masque. With his red

curls and his bright blue loin-cloth and make-up he is a very brilliant if slightly over-dramatized *Satan*. He is not cast in the Miltonic mould, but his fiery dancing is in effective contrast to the dignity and restraint of *Job* and his children and to the Sons of the Morning and their beautiful and measured movements. The only jarring note was struck by the *Elihu* of ALEXIS RASSINE. It seemed perfunctory, as though the rôle lacked meaning.

In this same programme we welcomed back a much-loved and long-absent dancer, ALICIA MARKOVA, who with ANTON DOLIN danced for us a *pas de deux* from PETIPA's *Don Quichotte*, to music by MINKUS.

The latest production by International Ballet, *The Sleeping Princess*, is designed for the cinema-going public



and was given its *première* at the Gaumont State Cinema, Kilburn. The house was packed, and to judge from the applause and the continuous buzz of approving comment that went on on all sides this company knows exactly what its public wants—a stage so crowded in the big ensembles that dancing is almost out of the question, and a Hollywood style of decoration. The reproduction of PETIPA's choreography is by NICOLAI SERGUÉEFF, and the dancing is competent if not inspiring, the best performance being that of ALGERANOFF in the mimed rôle of the *Wicked Fairy*. D. C. B.

Memo for June 1st

It will no longer be wise, I'm thinking, To speak of that knocking in the old engine as "pinking."



Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Practising Romantic

WHEN Mr. C. E. VULLIAMY maintains that "satire, like faith, is an infallible solvent of the human dilemma," he indicates, possibly with too confident a reliance on the flimsier weapon, the only practical ways of confronting an unsatisfactory world. The Age of Cant, as Byron called it, is still with us; and although the cant is political rather than religious, the times are as ripe for revolt as those that produced the, in so many ways, revolting *Byron* (JOSEPH, 15/-). Despite occasional spasms of flippancy and ferocity—perhaps a hangover after too many Byroniana?—this unusually fresh and forthright biography is of outstanding interest and significance. Its *Byron* is the result of new research from a new psychological angle; and *Byron's* symbolic value is carefully carried over to the account of an age sadly lacking in aristocratic liberators. It is curious that Mr. VULLIAMY does not perceive how gravely *Byron* and *Shelley* compromised their stand for humanity by their fantastic mishandling of personal responsibilities. But one cannot have it all ways. There has only been one English satirist-saint—*Thomas More*. A new "Don Juan"—"fluent ribaldries" that everyone can read—would be useful enough, pending a wider and wiser version of that Methodism whose attractions for *Don Juan* and for *Byron* himself were "perhaps more logical" than the poet supposed.

H. P. E.

An American Editor

MR. ELLERY SEDGWICK, now in his later seventies, was for thirty years editor of "*The Atlantic Monthly*," and in *The Happy Profession* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 15/-) has given a delightfully animated account of his life as a literary journalist, a form of existence which on this side of the

Atlantic does not as a rule stimulate ebullience. His early years were spent in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and after a brief grim experience of a military academy he went to Groton, which, though supposed to be a "rich boys' school," he found unpretentious, free from snobbishness, and a congenial place for "an untalented boy . . . reasonably unattractive, and most content when unnoticed." He must, however, have had the useful faculty of enlisting support from influential persons, for Mr. Walter H. Page recommended him for the post of editor of "*Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*," a derelict New York periodical, which by tact and tenacity he saved from foundering. In due course he transferred himself to "*McClure's Magazine*," and thence to "*The Atlantic Monthly*." Its general tone, he says, has been quiet and literary, with occasional political forays. President Wilson was his greatest hero, Al Smith the politician he was able to serve most effectively. "Gentlemen," said Al Smith to the reporters on the day of his nomination, "it wasn't you who nominated me. It was this high hat from Boston." The best pages in this book are those devoted to Lincoln and his wife, the great and tragic President and his half-insane wife touching a deeper level in the writer than his own memories.

H. K.

Flying to Battle

LORD TEDDER, though writing with sure authority and complete information, is a little disappointing in his technical summary—*Air Power in War* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 9/6). One expected perhaps something in the nature of horrific forecasts of future clashes, with all the atomic and bacteriological terrors deployed as weapons of the air, and though one admires the restraint that is visible in the generalizations of these reprinted lectures one feels that the familiar danger of fighting the last war over again in the next is not quite avoided. The writer is at his best when tracing the causes of the decline of the *Luftwaffe*—largely on account of mishandling by the higher command—and he really comes to life when, all too seldom, he makes full use of action illustrations. In a somewhat similar combination of theory and performance Mr. MICHAEL PACEK faithfully reflects the tedium of training, preparation and vain hope of getting to grips with the enemy for a full two-thirds of his half-historical *First Airborne* (SECKER AND WARBURG, 15/-). His attempts to liven the narrative by disjointed glimpses of the home lives and love-stories of a considerable and varying number of characters are not very successful, but he finishes triumphantly in an hour-by-hour account of the Arnhem fighting as seen from the far side of the river. This last is a piece of writing as brisk and as honest as one could desire.

C. C. P.

Steps to a Temple

The short stories of SHEN TSENG-WEN are more impressive as exhibiting youth wrenched out of its cultural context than as pledges of that culture's endurance. Between the ages of fourteen and twenty the author of *The Chinese Earth* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 9/6) was on active service, incidentally witnessing over seven hundred military executions. After this searing experience, he turned student, earning as he learnt. He can write, his editors and translators tell us, anywhere and everywhere; but perhaps for that very reason he is apt to reproduce the evidence of his senses inadequately meditated. The stories which, apart from their rather crude animality, attract by their freshness, betray expectation by their aimlessness. In general, as Messrs. Ching-Ti and Robert

Payne point out, they ignore the impact of the West; and emphasize the town's exploitation of the country as a replica of the old feudal tyranny. This, SHEN TSENG-WEN's most critical and visionary attitude, is admirably brought out in "The Husband," the tale of a farmer whose wife carries on a prostitute's trade in the city. A moving tribute to an old soldier-servant in "The Lamp" and a delightful study of a cook-boy in "The Yellow Chickens" prove that the author's craving to erect "a temple to summarize human nature" may yet be realized.

H. P. E.

Lord Hardinge's Viceroyalty

In "Old Diplomacy" Lord HARDINGE OF PENSHURST gave a general account of his diplomatic career. In *My Indian Years: 1910-1916* (JOHN MURRAY, 10/6), he tells the story of his Indian viceroyalty. His appointment, which realized the great ambition of his life, was a severe blow to Kitchener, who, while nervous enough of HARDINGE to send him a message that no one could be a satisfactory viceroy without a private income of at least £8,000, had been sufficiently confident of his own appointment to choose his staff. The preparations for the King-Emperor's Durbar at Delhi occupied most of Lord HARDINGE's energies in the first year of his viceroyalty. The magnificent ceremony of the Durbar seems to have had a composing effect on Indian nationalism, for there were no political murders in the following year. But in 1913 an attempt was made to assassinate Lord HARDINGE. He was riding through Delhi on an elephant when a bomb was thrown, which wounded him badly; and as the elephant was too frightened to kneel, wooden cases had to be piled up to enable his A.D.C. to reach him and lower him to the ground. The rest of his time in India was full of troubles, private and public. His wife returned to England to die, his son was killed at the front, and his handling of the Mesopotamian campaign attracted a great deal of censure which may have helped to reconcile him to being, in the last words of his narrative, "a nobody once more."

H. K.

For the Dog-Minded

Dogs are an increasing population in England, so are dog-breeders and dog-owners, and so, still more, are prospective breeders and prospective owners. *The Book of the Dog*, edited by Mr. BRIAN VESEY-FITZGERALD (NICHOLSON AND WATSON, £2 2s.), provides exactly (apart from the difficulty of getting a special lectern to keep it on) what these dog-followers need, with its thousand and more pages of alluring photographs and authoritative information. It will be for the enthusiast an unflinching source of delight, with its details and illustrations not only of the dogs we know but of those we don't and probably always won't—the Baffin Husky, the seldom met Boxer and the Brabançon, the Illyrian sheepdog, the Komondor and the Kuvasz. All dogs are here, big and small, satiny and plummy, and the book will cause possibly valuable moments of hesitation and even, still more valuable, of long delay to the prospective buyer before he decides to which of these easily pleased and near-blessed tyrants he will commit himself. From this book the owner may learn in advance what his pet's illnesses are likely to be, and how to take care of him. It is useful to know that a dog will not inevitably come to harm by doing all the things he intends to do, such as baking himself for hours before a fire, or bolting his food as fast as he can. From an expert we learn that he may swallow fur, feathers, bones and all in safety, and that there is more danger to be found in the eating of bread, which may give him fits. He may drink milk or water,

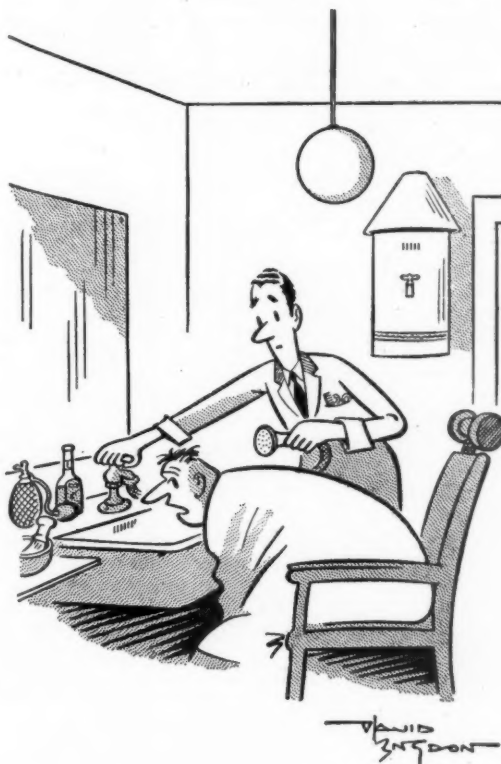
for, as Dean Stanley, an authority not included here, says: "There is no such thing as bad water. There is only water, and water that is too thick to drink."

S. L.

A Psychiatrist's Wicket

The prime moral of M. ANDRÉ MAUROIS' new novel, *Woman Without Love* (BODLEY HEAD, 9/6), seems to be that the vinegar type of Edwardian governess was an even less salutary influence abroad than she was at home. His heroine, the only daughter of impoverished aristocrats clinging to a great mouldering house in Limousin, is early in life mentally at the mercy of a jaundiced "Miss," whose unnatural views on marriage so colour the child's imagination that she grows up repelled by the physical side of love, in spite of a longing to experience its happiness. Her first husband is a wealthy manufacturer, a bluff, one-track genius of whom much might have been made by a less self-centred woman; her second a famous poet, to whom artistic affinity proves not to be sufficient. Yet this marriage survives until his death in the war, a tragedy in which Claire at last finds herself. The book is written partly in extracts from her journal, partly in narrative. It is a clever dissection of an unsympathetic character, but the fact is one becomes a little weary of Claire tirelessly chasing her inhibitions, to the cynical chorus of her rather shadowy friends. She is not impossible, but she is not real enough for us to feel she matters. The translation, by Miss JOAN CHARLES, is neat except for colloquial Americanisms which jar the tender sensibilities of an English reader.

E. O. D. K.



"The usual, I suppose. Start off scalding and end up freezing."

Assignment

THE studio policeman wrote down my name laboriously, then Mr. Zooniman's. He shook his head over the bit of paper as we went along the corridors, and once stopped a girl in a white sweater to say plaintively "Mr. Bolwork, for Mr. Zooniman." The girl clutched her armful of type-script closer and said "You don't say?" She hurried on. The policeman tentatively opened a door with a red light glowing above it; something inside hissed at him and he stepped back on to my foot, pondering. "Might be in 'is room," he said—"first left, first right," and turned and went back the way he had come.

First left, first right was a door with Production Office printed on it, but this had been crossed out in yellow chalk and an irregular scrap of paper pinned underneath. It was blank.

Two young ladies in trousers were the only occupants. One of them, studying a complex chart on squared paper, said without looking up, "Don't tread on the garage. Gilda, what about these shoes, size five, Wednesday?"

Gilda was holding a ringletted, blonde wig, and tapping an impatient foot against a grey engine with dials; it might have been a giant gas-meter. She suddenly burst out: "Four minutes that light's been on. Don't tell me even Blaschwitz shoots four minutes solid!" She gave me a look, summed me up as nothing, and jingled money in her trousers pocket.

"Mr. Zooniman?" I said, entering slightly.

"On the floor," said the girl with the chart. She gave a little cluck of annoyance. "Didn't Research ring back about those damn wheels?" But a bell shrilled, and Gilda, crying "And about time!" loped quickly to the door. I dodged nimbly.

"Mind the garage!"

I saw a pinkish blur below me and lengthened my stride to save a row of small cardboard petrol-pumps from annihilation. I staggered against the girl's desk and dropped my hat on to her chart. She moved it aside matter-of-factly.

"Do you remember," she said, "whether Muller-Rockleys had disc-wheels in 1923?"

"No," I said, "I'm afraid I don't."

"No." She sighed and passed my hat over. "Then I suppose you couldn't tell me anything about a Roundhead's underclothes?"

"I'm afraid not."

"Are you in films?" she said, suddenly suspicious.

"Not—not really."

"Oh, well."

Mr. Zooniman came sweeping in at that moment, crying "Darling," and stepping over the cardboard model without even looking down.

"Darling," he said to the girl—"a blue suit and a blue shirt."

"Yes, Mr. Zooniman."

"Don't let him try a white collar, darling."

"No, Mr. Zooniman."

He threw at me, affably enough, "Camera hates white, doesn't it?" I think if I had had time to answer I should have said "Yes, Mr. Zooniman," but he was talking to the girl again. "And they broke at twenty-to-one, darling. That means back in the make-up chair at half-past, and watch the girl with the long nose. All right, darling?"

"Yes, Mr. Zooniman." She accepted something in his manner, unrevealed to me, as a dismissal. As she went towards the door he called after her, "By the way, darling, what's your name?" I forget what it was, now. Something operatic, like Carmen, or Mimosa. It didn't go with the trousers. "I've been on the floor," said Mr. Zooniman, shaking hands with me.

"Well, did you get one?"

"One what?"

"A print of Lombard Street in 1677."

I told him my name and business. After a moment he remembered me. "Of course," he said, all smiles. "Mr. Bolwick!" Then, suddenly grave, "Look—I can't call you that. What's your first name?"

"John," I said, moving a few steps in my embarrassment.

"Mind the garage," said Mr. Zooniman. He had been sitting on the grey engine, and got up now, rubbing the seat of his trousers. "Joe," he said, "I've only got thirty thousand to spend on it." He looked at the engine. "That thing gets too warm when they've got the arcs on."

"Thirty thousand," I said, trying to look judicial.

"So we want to keep the sets down." He began to count on plump fingers. "Music-room, boat-house, bowling-alley, Mrs. Finney's bedroom—for the scene with the fire-extinguisher—"

I had no idea what he was talking about.

"Mr. Zooniman," I began.

"Yes, yes. I know that scene used to be in Oxford Street, but I have to pay a pound a foot for library shots. Then—"

"Mr. Zooniman." I raised my voice. "I haven't read the script yet."

He looked hurt. When he spoke his voice was mellow with reproach.

"Joe! But why?"

"I haven't seen it."

"Oh, well. In that case." He rummaged on the desk and presently handed me a thickly-bound folder. I saw that my name was printed on the front in red pencil, with a flattering approximation to the right spelling.

"Of course," he said, speaking very quickly, as if he was under some obligation to put out a certain number of words a minute, "we shall have to alter a lot of it. I thought of making the waif-girl, Connie, into a middle-aged man with some sort of fixation—gardening, collecting tram-numbers, something of that sort. Would that be an effective twist?"

I was searching the cast-list for the waif-girl, Connie. No such name appeared there.

"No such name appears here," I said.

"What's that?"

"I can't see Connie."

"You're right, Joe. She doesn't come to life. By the way, I think she was called Mrs. Telfer, Pulfer, Bolfer, or something when they did that master."

"Did what?"

"That master-script. It's an old treatment. But you'll get the gist all right. Chap thinks the girl's the other girl, the one his sister told him about. All that French sequence is out, and it isn't Connie in the laundry but a nephew of the old man. It's a new angle."

"Yes. I—"

"Might make the laundry a gymnasium. Strong comedy for Arthur, with punch-balls." Mr. Zooniman frowned, an inspiration burgeoning. Then his face lit up and he snapped his fingers. "And the fire-extinguisher!" he said. "Then we could cut out Mrs. Finney's bedroom, and get a 'U' certificate. So if you—what is it, darling?"

The girl with the operatic name had come back, carrying about forty collars. She went over and threw them on the desk.

"Mr. Blaschwitz says will you either speak to Mona Montague about wearing the bottle-green velvet or is he to stop shooting while they repaint the set."

"Just coming," said Mr. Zooniman calmly. "Did Cyril get the garden-roller?"



"Which vitamin is best for a deficiency in arithmetic?"

"Yes, Mr. Zooniman, but we've got to exchange it for one with a shorter handle."

Mr. Zooniman shook me warmly by the hand. "Good-bye, George," he said. "You'll do a fine job on that, I know. Let me hear something, say, Thursday?"

As the door closed behind him the girl held up a collar, squinting at it through half-closed eyes. "I should say that was purplish, huh?" she said. She got up and carried it to the window, turning her back on me. Taking up my hat and script I moved thoughtfully to the door. The studio policeman, just coming in, stood aside and saluted untidily.

"Morning, Mr. Blaschwitz," he said.
J. B. B.

The Wind in the Trees

THE sound of the wind in the trees
Must have taken me unawares,
For I fancied that someone had secretly
Carried the sea upstairs.

La Bouillotte de Ma Femme

THE annexe of the Hotel de la Terrasse was quiet as an old tomb. For being so it had justification, for two o'clock had already issued in a cracked tinkle from the church tower. Creeping out of my bedroom, I was determined not to become involved in another of the unspeakable imbroglios in which similar missions had landed me in the past. While I slipped the catch on the door as tenderly as if it had been the detonator of a mine, there flashed through my head those unforgettable scenes, each arising from identical beginnings, which had marred my reputation at a dozen other hostelrys of renown.

The landing was dark, and of the whereabouts of the switch I had no idea. I was tacking along the wall towards the stairs, like a lighter hugging some unfriendly coast, when my foot solidly engaged a solid object. From the immediate results I knew

this for a bucket, in the company of other buckets. (In France spring-cleaning has always revolved round whole clusters of these monsters of treachery.) First of all came the initial explosion, then a loud slithering noise, and finally a couple of shattering reports much farther up the landing. In the awful quiet that followed my heart coined a new rhythm crazy enough to turn the Inkspots green. Peace seemed to survive a long time, but in fact it can only have been a few seconds before two opposite doors burst open to emit pandemonium and bright shafts of intersecting light. From one came the rumbling of a winged rhinoceros, from the other the high-pitched squawking with which anyone is familiar who has trodden on the toe of a dozing pelican. What had happened of course was that three buckets had lain in wait for me in clover-leaf formation, and in kicking the rearward one I had played a stroke

with the other two of which, in different circumstances, Joe Davis himself might have been proud.

The rhino turned out a tall desiccated fellow in much shrunk pyjamas, while the pelican was simply a human barrel of indeterminate sex. Indignation bore them from their rooms like projectiles, and as each tripped over a perfectly-placed bucket they met head-on in a mood of emotional incandescence which appeared to be shared about equally. Feeling, like a submarine commander who has exceeded his brief, that to submerge was everything, I sank rapidly down the stair-head.

And that was the moment chosen by my slippers to lose contact with the newly-polished wood.

To whatever extent you may since have squandered your life, at some time you must have whizzed on a door-mat down one of those circular towers at a fair. The stairs of the annexe were circular, but there was no door-mat and the surface was corrugated. If you can imagine a grand piano dropped down an escalator by Laurel and Hardy you will get a minimum idea of the sound of my descent. Its force shot me out into the centre of the first landing. Instantly the lights went on, and as I lay sprawled untidily a very old lady in a flowered dressing-gown appraised me through pince-nez held unwaveringly at arm's-length.

"I ask myself if you are dead, monsieur," she said calmly.

"All the dead are to be found on the *deuxième étage, madame*," I replied weakly.

Many doors were now opening, so I slipped downstairs again, through the bar and the big doors, into the night. Outside, the wide black ribbon of the Seine sucked gently at the mud. But already the ribbon had a pattern on it, an animated pattern of gesticulating silhouettes cast from the windows above. I knew that in the main hotel, a few hundred yards up the village, M. Tarragon slept beside his kitchen and was only too ready to sit up all night recounting gastronomic japes played on oafish German generals, the fun of Paris fifty years ago, and how no other than Escoffier had shouted: "Bring me the immeasurable poet who has written history with this sauce!" And therefore I tapped firmly at his window without foreboding.

"A pleasure of what magnitude!" he cried, when he saw what I was carrying. "But surely, on so warm a night?"

"It is a habit," I said, sniffing at the beautiful after-savour of his kitchen; hot butter, and herbs, and France.

"It is a habit I do not understand, but it is also one which has to be accepted."

"Why not?" asked M. Tarragon, stooping in his blue night-dress to rake the stove. "Like wine and snuff.

Nothing which adds finesse to such a life has need of explanation. In the meantime—," and he reached upwards to a shelf of filmy bottles.

"Thank you," I said. "It is a little late. Conversely, it is a little early."

"That is a cruel slander on the childlike good-nature of Calvados," he exclaimed, pouring manfully, "which Monsieur would be the last to intend. Tell me frankly. Do you find us as we used to be?"

"You were never better," I answered from my heart. "The *quenelles de brochet* to-night were from another world."

The old man smiled happily.

"*La bonne cuisine*, felicitously married to the tranquillity of the king of rivers, is not to be enjoyed too lightly. I am sorry to have been obliged to put you in the annexe, but there the tranquillity is of an order quite special."

"It is something I shall never forget," I declared.

Somewhat later, my mission accomplished, we bade one another good-night. When I got back to the annexe its tranquillity was still out of the ordinary. And so I sat down in my pyjamas on a bench by the Seine, watching the oil-stains floating down from Rouen and embracing, lest it should take chill from the night air, my old friend, the red rubber hot-water bottle.

ERIC.



Sickier

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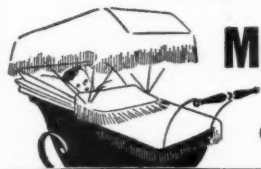
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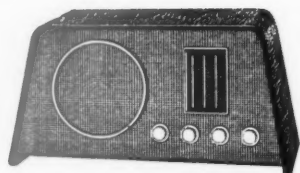
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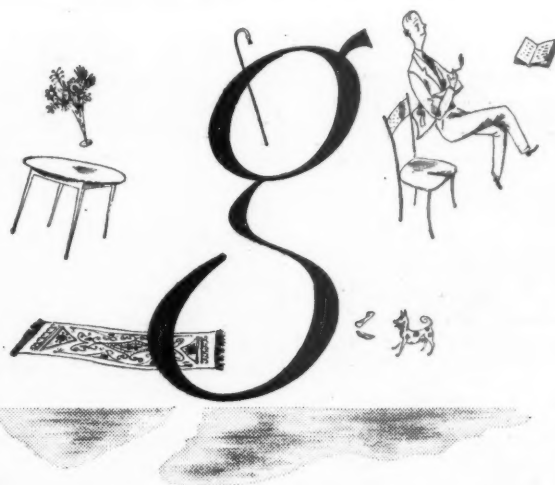
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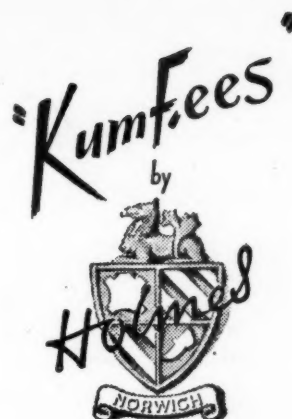


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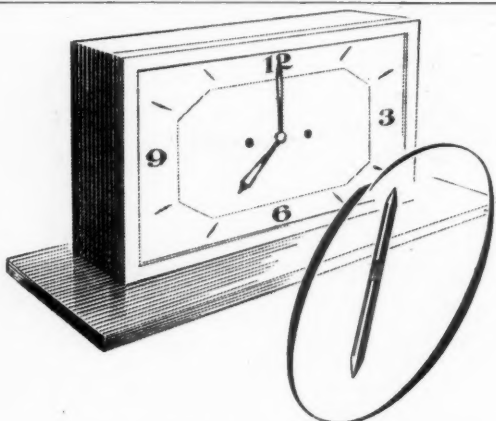
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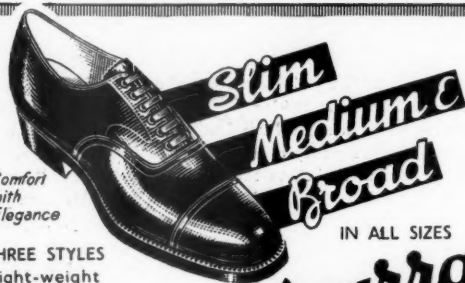
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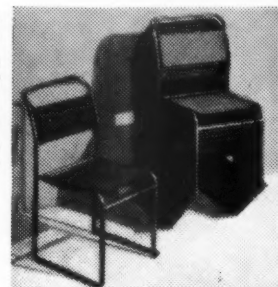


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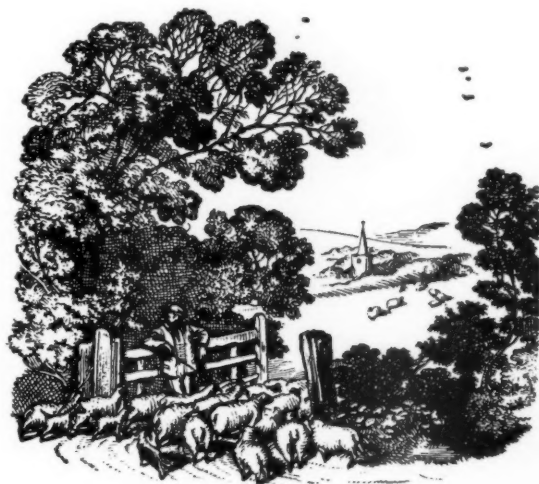
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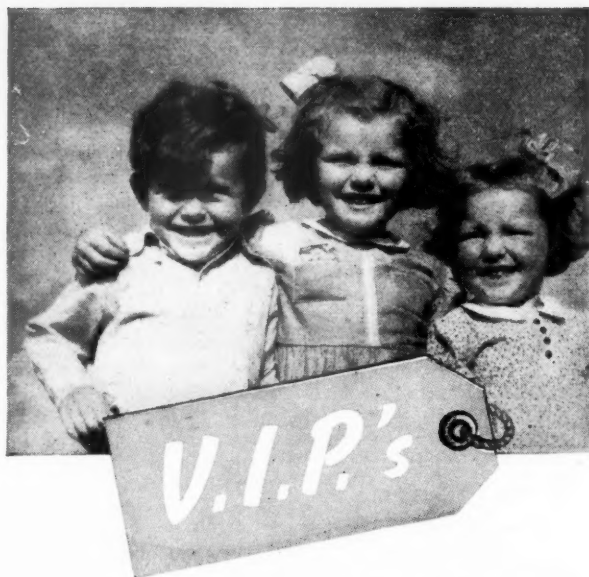
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